

I support this proposal not only because it's fair and it makes sense, but also because it would reduce the burden on the FCC of maintaining Novice and Advanced class licenses in the FCC database. I recommend only a few changes to the proposal for simplification: Reduce the waiting-period before automatic upgrading of Novice and Advanced class license holders to the next higher license class from 20 years to 10 years, so it coincides with the first renewal. Also, all existing Novice class licensees who have been licensed for at least 10 years should be automatically upgraded to Technician-Plus immediately upon adoption of this proposal.

It appears that the only opposition to the proposal is from existing higher-level hams who do not want to make things any easier for other hams. This is similar to much of the opposition to lowering the code barrier: The FCC wisely decided to eliminate the code requirement for the entry-level Technician licenses and to reduce the code speed to only 5 wpm for the rest of us. Similarly, the FCC should dismiss any opposing comments and proceed to implement the automatic upgrade proposal.

I was originally licensed as a Novice in 1960, and I became Extra-Class well before the code speed was reduced to only 5 wpm. That reduction in code speed was well overdue. I've also held a "commercial" FCC radiotelephone operator's license since 1961. I am a graduate electrical engineer, a lifetime member of the ARRL, and an ARRL-accredited VE. It's about time that we recognize most of our competence is gained from operating on-the-air and not from memorizing the inane questions in the question pool sets. Implementing the proposal is the best way for the FCC to do this.

Steven Karty - N5SK